THE FABLES OF ÆSOP

ILLUSTRATED WITH 25 DRAWINGS IN COLOUR
BY EDWARD J. DETMOLD · LONDON · 1909
HODDER & STOUGHTON

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

Except where separately acknowledged the fables in this volume are printed from the third edition of Sir Roger L'Estrange's translation (1699). *The publishers are indebted to Messrs. George Routledge & Sons, Ld., for permission to use those from the version of the Rev. G. F. Townsend*

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THE VAIN JACKDAW

Fable I

A *Jackdaw* that had a mind to be Sparkish, Trick'd himself up with all the *Gay-Feathers* he could Muster together: And upon the Credit of these Stoll'n, or Borrow'd Ornaments, he Valu'd himself above All the Birds in the Air Beside. The Pride of this Vanity got him the Envy of all his Companions, who, upon a Discovery of the Truth of the Case, fell to Pluming of him by Consent; and when Every Bird had taken his Own *Feather;* the Silly *Jackdaw* had Nothing left him to Cover his Nakedness.

The Moral

We steal from one Another all manner of Ways, and to all manner of Purposes; Wit, as well as Feathers; but where Pride and Beggery Meet, People are sure to be made Ridiculous in the Conclusion.

The Vain *Jackdaw*

THE ANTS AND THE GRASSHOPPER

Fable II

As the *Ants* were Airing their Provisions One Winter, Up comes a hungry *Grasshopper* to 'em, and begs a Charity. They told him that he should have Wrought in Summer, if he would not have Wanted in Winter. Well, says the *Grasshopper*, but I was not Idle neither; for I Sung out the Whole Season. Nay then, said they, You shall e'en do Well to make a Merry Year on't, and Dance in Winter to the Tune that You Sung in Summer.

The Moral

A Life of Sloth is the Life of a Brute; but Action and Industry is the Bus'ness of a Great, a Wise, and a Good Man.

The *Ants* and The *Grasshopper*

THE EAGLE AND THE ARROW

Fable III

AN *Eagle* that was Watching upon a Rock once for a *Hare*, had the Ill Hap to be struck with an *Arrow*. This *Arrow*, it seems was Feather'd from her own Wing, Which very Consideration went nearer her Heart, she said, than Death itself.

The Moral

Nothing goes nearer a Man in his Misfortunes, than to find himself Undone by his Own Folly, or but any way Accessary to his own Ruine.

The *Eagle* and The *Arrow*

THE OXEN AND THE AXLE-TREES

Fable IV

THE *Axle-trees* were Complaining of the Ingratitude of the *Oxen*. How often, say they, have we, when Timber, fed ye with our Leaves, and reliev'd ye under our Shadow? and for You to drag us now at this rate, over Dirt and Stones! Alas! cry'd the *Oxen*: Do you not see how we Pant and Groan, and how we are Goaded on, to do what we Do? The *Axle-trees* Consider'd how unwillingly they did it, and so Forgave them.

The Moral

What we are forc'd to do by an Over-ruling Power and Necessity, is not properly our own Act.

The *Oxen* and The *Axle-Trees*

THE TOWN MOUSE AND THE COUNTRY MOUSE

THERE goes an Old Story of a *Country Mouse* that Invited a *Town-Sister* of hers to a Country Collation, where she spar'd for Nothing that the Place afforded; as Mouldy Crusts, Cheese-Parings, Musty Oatmeal, Rusty Bacon, and the like. Now the *Town-Dame* was so well bred, as Seemingly to take All in Good Part: But yet at last, Sister (says she, after the Civilest Fashion) why will you be Miserable when you may be Happy? Why will you lie Pining, and Pinching your self in such a Lonesome Starving Course of Life as This is; when 'tis but going to Town along with Me; to Enjoy all the Pleasures, and Plenty that your Heart can Wish? This was a Temptation the *Country Mouse* was not able to Resist; so that away they Trudg'd together, and about Midnight got to their Journeys End. The *Town-Mouse* show'd her Friend the Larder, the Pantry, the Kitchin, and Other Offices where she laid her Stores; and after This, carry'd her into the Parlour, where they found, yet upon the Table, the Reliques of a Mighty Entertainment of That very Night. The *Town-Mouse*

Carv'd her Companion of what she lik'd Best, and so to't they fell upon a Velvet Couch together: The Poor *Bumpkin* that had never seen, nor heard of such Doings before, Bless'd her self at the Change of her Condition, when (as ill luck would have it) all on a Sudden, the Doors flew open, and in comes a Crew of Roaring Bullies, with their Wenches, their Dogs and their Bottles, and put the Poor *Mice* to their Wits End, how to save their Skins. The Stranger Especially, that had never been at This Sport before; but she made a Shift however for the present, to slink into a Corner, where she lay Trembling and Panting 'till the Company went their Way. So soon as ever the House was Quiet again, Well: My *Court Sister*, says she, If This be the Way of Your *Town-Gamboles*, I'll e'en back to my Cottage, and my Mouldy Cheese again; for I had much rather lie Knabbing of Crusts, without either Fear or Danger, in my Own Little Hole, than be Mistress of the Whole World with Perpetual Cares and Alarums.

The Moral

The Difference betwixt a Court and a Country Life. The Delights, Innocence, and Security of the One, Compar'd with the Anxiety, the Wickedness, and the Hazards of the other.

The *Town Mouse* and The *Country Mouse*

THE SHE-GOATS AND THEIR BEARDS

Fable VI

THE She-goats having obtained by request from Jupiter the favour of a beard, the He-goats, sorely displeased, made complaint that the females equalled them in dignity. "Suffer them," said Jupiter, "to enjoy an empty honour, and to assume the badge of your nobler sex, so long as they are not your equals in strength or courage."

The Moral

It matters little if those who are inferior to us in merit should be like us in outside appearances.

[Edition of Rev. G. F. Townsend, 1867.]

The *She-Goats* and Their *Beards*

THE MOUNTAIN IN LABOUR

Fable VII

WHEN *Mountains* cry out, people may well be Excus'd the Apprehension of some Prodigious Birth. This was the Case here in the Fable. The Neighbourhood were All at their Wits end, to consider what would be the Issue of That Labour, and instead of the Dreadful Monster that they Expected, Out comes at last a Ridiculous *Mouse*.

The Moral

Much ado about Nothing.

The *Mountain* in *Labour*

THE MONKEYS AND THEIR MOTHER

Fable VIII

THERE was a *Monkey* that had Twins: She Doted upon One of them, and did not much care for T'other. She took a sudden Fright once, and in a Hurry whips up her Darling under her Arm, and carries the Other a Pick-a-Pack upon her Shoulders. In This Haste and Maze, Down she comes, and beats out her Favourites Brains against a Stone; but That which she had at her Back came off Safe and Sound.

The Moral

Fondlings are Commonly Unfortunate.

The *Monkeys* and Their *Mother*

THE MONKEY AND THE FISHERMEN

Fable IX

A Monkey was sitting up in a high tree, when, seeing some Fishermen laying their nets in a river, he watched what they were doing. The Men had no sooner set their nets, and retired a short distance to their dinner, than the Monkey came down from the tree, thinking that he would try his hand at the same sport. But in attempting to lay the nets he got so entangled in them, that being well nigh choked, he was forced to exclaim: "This serves me right, for what business had I, who knew nothing of fishing, to meddle with such tackle as this?"

[Edition of Rev. Thomas James, 1848.]

The *Monkey* and The *Fishermen*

THE HART AND THE VINE

Fable X

A *Hart* that was hard Press'd by the Huntsmen, took Sanctury in a *Vineyard*, and there he lay Close, under the *C*overt of a *Vine*. So soon as he thought the Danger was Over, he fell presently to Browzing upon the Leaves; and whether it was the Rustling, or the Motion of the Boughs, that gave the Huntsmen an Occasion for a Stricter Search, is Uncertain; but a Search there was, and in the End he was Discover'd, and shot. He dy'd in fine, with this Conviction upon him, that his Punishment was Just, for offering Violence to his Protector.

The Moral

Ingratitude Perverts all the Measures of Religion and Society, by making it Dangerous to be Charitable and Good Natur'd.

The *Hart* and The *Vine*

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THE LION AND THE THREE BULLS

Fable XI

THERE was a Party of *Three Bulls* that Struck up a League to Keep and Feed together, and to be *One and All*, in case of a Common Enemy. If the *Lyon* could have Met with any of them Single, he would have done His Work, but so long as they Stuck to This Confederacy, there was No Dealing with them. They fell to Variance at last among Themselves: The *Lyon* made his Advantage of it, and then with Great Ease he Gain'd his End.

The Moral

This is to tell us the Advantage, the Necessity, and the Form of Union; And that Division brings Ruine.

The *Lion* and The *Three Bulls*

THE GOAT AND THE ASS

Fable XII

A Man once kept a Goat and an Ass. The Goat, envying the Ass on account of his greater abundance of food, said, "How shamefully you are treated: at one time grinding in the mill, and at another carrying heavy burdens;" and he further advised him that he should pretend to be epileptic, and fall into a ditch, and so obtain rest. The Ass gave credence to his words, and falling into a ditch, was very much bruised. His master, sending for a leech, asked his advice. He bade him pour upon the wounds the lights of a Goat. They at once killed the Goat, and so healed the Ass.

[Edition of Rev. G. F. Townsend, 1867.]

The *Goat* and The *Ass*

THE BIRDS, THE BEASTS, AND THE BAT

Fable XIII

UPON a Desperate and Doubtful Battel betwixt the *Birds* and the *Beasts*, the *Bat* stood *Neuter*, till she found that the *Beasts* had the Better on't, and then went over to the stronger Side. But it came to pass afterward (as the Chance of War is Various) that the *Birds* Rally'd their Broken Troops, and carry'd the Day; and away she went Then to T'other Party, where she was Try'd by a Council of War as a Deserter; Stript, Banish'd, and finally Condemn'd never to see Day-light again.

The Moral

Trimming *in some Cases is Foul, and Dishonest; in others Laudable, and in some again, not only Honest, but Necessary. The Nicety lies in the skill of Distinguishing upon Cases, Times, and Degrees.*

The *Birds*, The *Beasts*, and The *Bat*

Fable XIV

WHAT a Dull Heavy Creature (says a *Hare*) is This same *Tortoise!* And yet (says the *Tortoise*) I'll run with you for a Wager. 'Twas *Done and Done*, and the *Fox*, by Consent, was to be the Judg. They started together, and the *Tortoise* kept Jogging on still, 'till he came to the End of the Course. The *Hare* lay'd himself down about Midway, and took a Nap; for, says he, I can fetch up the *Tortoise* when I please: But he Over-slept himself it seems, for when he came to wake, though he scudded away as fast as 'twas possible, the *Tortoise* got to the Post before him, and Won the Wager.

The Moral

Up and be Doing, *is an Edifying Text; for Action is the Bus'ness of Life, and there's no Thought of ever coming to the End of our Journey in time, if we sleep by the Way.*

The *Hare* and The *Tortoise*

THE GEESE AND THE CRANES

Fable XV

SOME Sports-men that were abroad upon Game, spy'd a Company of *Geese* and *Cranes* a Feeding together, and so made in upon 'em as fast as their Horses could carry them. The *Cranes* that were Light, took Wing immediately, and sav'd themselves, but the *Geese* were Taken; for they were Fat, and Heavy, and could not Shift so well as the Other.

The Moral

Light of Body and Light of Purse, comes much to a Case in Troublesome Times; Only the One saves himself by his Activity, and the Other scapes because he is not worth the Taking.

The *Geese* and The *Cranes*

THE EAGLE AND HIS CAPTOR

Fable XVI

A *Man* took an *Eagle*, Pelted his Wings, and put him among his *Hens*. Somebody came and bought This and presently New Feather'd him. He made a Flight at a *Hare*, Truss'd it, and brought it to his Benefactor. A *Fox* perceiving This, came and gave a Man a piece of Good Counsel. Have a care, says *Reynard*, of putting too much Confidence in This *Eagle*; for he'll go near, one time or other else, to take You for a *Hare*. Upon this Advice the Man Plum'd the *Eagle* once again.

The Moral

Persons and Humours may be Jumbled and Disguis'd, but Nature is like Quicksilver, that will never be Kill'd.

The *Eagle* and His *Captor*

THE WASP AND THE SNAKE

Fable XVII

A Wasp seated himself upon the head of a Snake, and striking him unceasingly with his stings wounded him to death. The Snake, being in great torment, and not knowing how to rid himself of his enemy, or to scare him away, saw a wagon heavily laden with wood, and went and purposely placed his head under the wheels, and said, "I and my enemy shall thus perish together."

[Edition of Rev. G. F. Townsend. 1867.]

The *Wasp* and The *Snake*

THE GRASSHOPPER AND THE OWL

Fable XVIII

AN Owl sat sleeping in a Tree. But a Grasshopper, who was singing beneath, would not let her be quiet, abusing her with very indecent and uncivil Language; telling her she was a scandalous Person, who plied a-nights to get her Living, and shut her self up all day in a hollow Tree. The Owl desir'd her to hold her Tongue and be quiet: Notwithstanding which, she was the more impertinent. She beg'd of her a second time, to leave off; but all to no purpose: The Owl, vext at the heart to find that all she said went for nothing, cast about to inveigle her by a Stratagem. Well, says she, since one must be kept awake, 'tis a pleasure however to be kept awake by so agreeable a Voice; which, I must confess, is no ways inferior to the finest Harp. And, now I think on't, I have a Bottle of excellent Nectar, which my Mistress *Pallas* gave me; if you have a mind, I'll give you a Dram to wet your Whistle. The Grasshopper, ready to die with Thirst, and, at the same Time, pleas'd to be so complimented upon Account of her Voice, skip'd up to the Place very briskly: when the Owl advancing to

meet her, seiz'd, and without much Delay, made her a Sacrifice to her Revenge: securing to her self, by the Death of her Enemy, a Possession of that Quiet, which, during her Life-time, she could not enjoy.

(From the Application)

. . . . . We have no Right to be impertinent with one another to extremity; and tho' there is no Law to punish such Incivilities . . . . they will scarce fail of meeting with deserved and just Chastisement, some way or other.

[Third Edition of S. Croxall, 1731.]

The *Grasshopper* and The *Owl*

THE FOX AND THE CRANE

Fable XIX

THERE was a Great Friendship once betwixt a *Fox* and a *Crane*, and the Former would needs Invite the Other to a Treat. They had Several Soups serv'd up in Broad Dishes and Plates, and so the *Fox* fell to Lapping himself, and bad his Guest Heartily Welcom to what was before him. The *Crane* found he was Put upon, but set so good a Face however upon his Entertainment; that his Friend by All means must take a Supper with Him That night in Revenge. The *Fox* made Several Excuses upon the Matter of Trouble and Expence, but the *Crane* in fine, would not be said Nay; So that at last, he promis'd him to come. The Collation was serv'd up in Glasses, with Long Narrow Necks, and the Best of Every thing that was to be had. Come (says the *Crane* to his Friend) Pray be as Free as if you were at home, and so fell to't very Savourly Himself. The *Fox* quickly found This to be a Trick, though he could not but Allow of the Contrivance as well as the Justice of the Revenge. For such a Glass

of Sweet-Meats to the One, was just as much to the Purpose, as a Plate of Porridge to the Other.

The Moral

'Tis allowable in all the Liberties of Conversation to give a Man a Rowland for his Oliver, *and to* pay him in his Own Coin, *as we say; provided always that we keep within the Compass of Honour, and Good Manners.*

The *Fox* and The *Crane*

THE MONKEY AND THE DOLPHIN

Fable XX

PEOPLE were us'd in the Days of Old, to carry Gamesome *Puppies* and *Monkeys* with 'em to Sea, to pass away the Time withal. Now there was One of these *Monkeys*, it seems, abord a Vessel that was cast away in a very great Storm. As the Men were Paddling for their Lives, and the *Monkey* for Company, a Certain *Dolphin* that took him for a Man, got him upon his Back, and was making towards Land with him. He had him into a Safe Road call'd the *Pyræus*, and took occasion to Ask the *Monkey*, whether he was an *Athenian* or not? He told him Yes, and of a very Ancient Family there. Why then (says the *Dolphin*) You know *Pyræus:* Oh! exceedingly well, says T'other (taking it for the Name of a Man) Why *Pyræus* is my very Particular Good Friend. The *Dolphin*, upon This, had such an Indignation for the Impudence of the *Buffon-Monkey*, that he gave him the

Slip from between his Legs, and there was an End of my very Good Friend, the *Athenian*.

The Moral

Bragging, Lying, and Pretending, has Cost many a Man his Life and Estate.

The *Monkey* and The *Dolphin*

THE EAGLE AND THE BEETLE

Fable XXI

A *Hare* that was hard put to't by an *Eagle*, took Sanctuary in a Ditch with a *Beetle*. The *Beetle* Interceded for the *Hare:* The *Eagle* Flapt off the former, and Devoured the other. The *Beetle* took this for an Affront to Hospitality, as well as to her Self, and so Meditated a Revenge, watch'd the *Eagle* up to her Nest, follow'd her, and took her Time when the *Eagle* was Abroad, and so made a shift to Roll out the Eggs, and Destroy the Brood. The *Eagle* upon this Disappointment, Timber'd a great deal higher next Bout; The *Beetle* watch'd her still, and shew'd her the same Trick once again. Whereupon the *Eagle* made her Appeal to *Jupiter*, who gave her leave to lay her next Course of Eggs in his own Lap. But the *Beetle* found out a way to make *Jupiter* rise from his Throne; so that upon the Loosning of his Mantle, the Eggs fell from him at unawares, and the *Eagle* was a Third time Defeated. *Jupiter* stomached the

Indignity, but upon Hearing the Cause, he found the *Eagle* to be the Aggressor, and so Acquitted the *Beetle*.

The Moral

'Tis not for a Generous Prince to Countenance Oppression and Injustice, even in his most Darling Favourites.

The *Eagle* and The *Beetle*

THE POMEGRANATE, THE APPLE TREE AND THE BRAMBLE

Fable XXII

THERE happen'd a Controversy once betwixt a *Pomegranate*, and an *Apple*, which was the Fairer Fruit of the Two. They were so Loud in their Discourse, that a *Bramble* from the next Hedg, Over-heard them. Come (says the *Bramble*) we are *All Friends*, and pray let's have No Jangling among our selves.

The Moral

Every Thing would be Thought Greater in the World than it is; and the Root of it is This, that it first thinks it self so.

The *Pomegranate*, The *Apple Tree*, and The *Bramble*

THE OWL AND THE BIRDS

Fable XXIII

THERE goes a Story of an *Owl* that was advised by the *Birds* to Build rather among the Boughs and Leaves, as They did, than in Walls and Hollow Trees; and so they shew'd her a young Tender Plant for her Purpose. No, no, says the *Owl*, these Twigs in time will come to be Lim'd, and then you're all Lost if you do but touch 'em. The *Birds* gave little Heed to't, and so went on Playing and Chirping among the Leaves still, and passing their Time there in Flocks as formerly; till in conclusion the Sprigs were all daub'd with Lime, and the poor Wretches clamm'd and taken. Their Repentance came now too late; but in Memory of this Notable Instance of the *Owl's* Foresight, the *Birds* never see an *Owl* to this very Day, but they Flock about her and Follow her, as if it were for a New Lesson. But our *Modern Owls* have only the *Eyes*, the *Beak* and the *Plume* of the *Owls* of *Athens*, without the Wisdom.

The Moral.

Good Counsel is lost upon those that have not the Grace to hearken to't; or do not Understand it, or will not Embrace and Follow it in the proper Season.

The *Owl* and The *Birds*

THE LARK BURYING HER FATHER

Fable XXIV

THE Lark (according to an ancient legend) was created before the earth itself: and when her father died by a fell disease, as there was no earth, she could find for him no place of burial. She let him lie uninterred for five days, and on the sixth day, being in perplexity, she buried him in her own head. Hence she obtained her crest, which is popularly said to be her father's grave-hillock.

The Moral

Youth's first duty is reverence to parents.

[Edition of Rev. G. I. Townsend, 1867.]

The *Lark* Burying Her *Father*

THE WOLF AND THE GOAT

Fable XXV

A *Wolf* spy'd a *Goat* upon the Crag of a High Rock, and so call'd out to him after this Manner: Hadst not thou better come Down now, says the *Wolf*, into This Delicate Fine Meadow? Well, says the *Goat*, and so perhaps I would, if it were not for the *Wolf* that's there Before me: But I'm for a Life of Safety, rather than for a Life of Pleasure. Your Pretence is the Filling of My Belly with Good Grass; but your Bus'ness is the Cramming of your Own Guts with Good *Goats-Flesh*: so that 'tis for your Own Sake, not Mine, that you'd have me come down.

The Moral

There's no Trusting to the Formal Civilities and Invitations of an Enemy, and his Reasonings are but Snares when he pretends to Advise us for our Good.

The *Wolf* and The *Goat*